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SUBJECT: OBSERVERS FOR SEPT 11 ELECTIONS

1. SECGEN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE EMBASSY A MESSAGE WHICH FONMIN DO IS SENDING TO CHIEFS OF DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR MISSIONS ACCREDITED TO SAIGON. UNOFFICIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THIS MESSAGE FOLLOWS:

"THE FAVORABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MILITARY AND ECONOMIC SITUATION IN VIET NAM OVER THE PAST YEAR IS A FACT WHICH IMPARTIAL COMMENTATORS FREQUENTLY MENTION AND WHICH POINTS UP THE MOVEMENT TOWARDS A MORE STABLE SITUATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

"NEVERTHELESS, THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM BELIEVES THAT THERE CAN BE NO LASTING MILITARY SUCCESS NOR LASTING ECONOMIC PROGRESS UNLESS THE NATION ITSELF IS PROVIDED WITH A HEALTHY POLITICAL STRUCTURE BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE OF DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION BY THE PEOPLE IN THE CHOICE OF ITS REPRESENTATIVES. IT IS FOR THESE REASONS THAT MY GOVERNMENT DECIDED TO ORGANIZE ELECTIONS FOR A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, AND FIX THESE ELECTIONS FOR SEPTEMBER 11, 1966.

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"THIS DELIBERATE DECISION BY A GOVERNMENT WHICH HAS TO COPE WITH A SAVAGE WAR UNDER CONDITIONS MADE DIFFICULT BY BOTH HISTORICAL AND MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS, GIVES ELOQUENT TESTIMONY TO THE WILL OF THAT GOVERNMENT TO SPEED UP THE PROCESS OF THE POLITICAL EVOLUTION OF THE COUNTRY.

"IN THIS CONNECTION, I SHOULD LIKE TO DRAW YOUR ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT THIS DECISION HAS BEEN CLEARLY DEFINED

AND THAT THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE ELECTIONS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED.

"AS IS USUAL UNDER THE TRADITIONAL PROCEDURES OF DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS, THE BASIC DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN PROMULGATED AND DISTRIBUTED, VOTER REGISTRATION CARDS HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED, AND LISTS OF CANDIDATES HAVE BEEN POSTED. THE GOVERNMENT OF VIET NAM THEREFORE IS SEEING TO IT THAT ITS ACTS ARE ENTIRELY IN CONFORMITY WITH ITS DECLARATIONS, BECAUSE IT KNOWS THAT ITS REAL STRENGTH AND THE JUSTNESS OF ITS CAUSE RESIDE IN ITS GOOD WILL AND IN ITS SINCERITY.

"GENERAL NGUYEN CAO KY, PRIME MINISTER OF VIETNAM, HAS SEVERAL TIMES AFFIRMED THAT HE WOULD TAKE ALL MEASURES NECESSARY TO ASSURE THAT THE ELECTIONS ARE ENTIRELY FREE AND HONEST, AND THAT ALL LEVELS OF THE VIETNAMESE POPULATION WILL BE ABLE TO MANIFEST THEIR WILL. IN THE NAME OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM, I ALSO HAVE EXPRESSED THE WISH THAT ALL FOREIGN PRESS ORGANIZATIONS WILL SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO VIET NAM TO FOLLOW THE COURSE OF THE ELECTIONS AND TO TAKE NOTE OF

THE FREE AND DEMOCRATIC CHARACTER OF THESE ELECTIONS. EARLIER, I INFORMED HIS EXCELLENCY U THANT THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM WOULD WELCOME OBSERVATION FROM THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION.

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"I AM HAPPY TO INFORM YOU THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM WOULD RECEIVE WITH PLEASURE ALL OBSERVERS WHO MIGHT COME TO VIET NAM IN GOOD FAITH WITH THE SAME GOAL. THEREFORE, I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL TO YOU IF YOU WOULD BRING TO THE ATTENTION OF YOUR GOVERNMENT THISCORDIAL INVITATION. INSOFAR AS POSSIBLE WITHIN THE LIMITS OF THE RESOURCES OF MY GOVERNMENT, ALL POSSIBLE FACILITIES FOR LODGING OF AND TRAVEL BY OBSERVERS WHO COME TO WATCH THE ELECTIONS OF THE 11TH OF SEPTEMBER WILL BE EXTENDED, IN ORDER THAT THEY MAY OBSERVE AT FIRST-HAND THE DEMOCRATIC CHARACTER OF THIS IMPORTANT EVENT. MOREOVER, IF MEMBERS OF YOUR MISSION SHOULD DESIRE ANY ASSISTANCE WHATSOEVER IN ACCOMPLISHING THEIR OBSERVATION TASK DURING THE ELECTIONS, THE VIETNAMESE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WOULD BE READY TO COME TO THEIR ASSISTANCE. PLEASE ACCEPT THE ASSURANCES OF MY HIGH CONSIDERATIONS.

DR. TRAN VAN DO"

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NOTE: ADVANCE COPY TO S/S-O, 8/25/66
PASSED WHITE HOUSE, DOD, CIA, USIA, NSA 8/25/66

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